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Forests for people, livelihoods and poverty eradication

Letter dated 9 December 2010 from the Permanent Representative of Ghana to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit herewith the summary report of the major groups-led initiative in support of the United Nations Forum on Forests on the theme "Applying sustainable forest management to poverty reduction: strengthening the multi-stakeholder approach within the United Nations Forum on Forests", which was held in Accra, from 26 to 30 July 2010.

(*Signed*) Leslie K. **Christian**
Permanent Representative of Ghana to the United Nations

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Applying sustainable forest management to poverty reduction: strengthening the multi-stakeholder approach within the United Nations Forum on Forests

Summary report of the major groups-led initiative in support of the United Nations Forum on Forests, Accra, 26-30 July 2010

Summary

The effective participation of major groups is crucial to the success of the United Nations Forum on Forests. Creating and enhancing opportunities for active and effective major groups participation is thus a critical task for major groups, as well as Governments and other stakeholders of the United Nations Forum on Forests. To address this need, major groups organized a major groups initiative workshop in support of the Forum. The workshop took place in Accra, from 26 to 30 of July 2010, and brought together approximately 70 key representatives from 30 countries. The central goal of the event was to actively engage major groups and support the United Nations Forum on Forests process by developing input and policy recommendations for the ninth session of the Forum on the theme "Forests for people, livelihoods and poverty eradication".

The major groups-led initiative in support of the United Nations Forum on Forests was hosted by the Government of Ghana. The initiative was made possible through financial support from the Governments of Norway, Finland, United Kingdom, Austria and Canada, as well as from the International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO).

In approaching the overall theme, participants heard presentations on a number of case studies, and focused their discussions on four topics: tenure rights, access and benefit sharing; traditional forest-related knowledge; community-based forest enterprises; and women, indigenous peoples and other marginalized groups' leadership for sustainable forest management. Based on the workshop discussions, key recommendations were developed for presentation at the ninth session of the Forum in January 2011.

In addition to developing policy recommendations for that session, participants also discussed ways to enhance participation of major groups in the United Nations Forum on Forests, and begin planning activities in support of the International Year of Forests.

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I. Background and context

1. In 2009, the eighth session of the United Nations Forum on Forests passed a resolution to "[e]ncourage Member States and request the UNFF secretariat to explore ways to increase stakeholder and civil society participation, including indigenous and other local and forest dependent communities … in future sessions of the Forum".[1]

2. Scheduled in early 2011, the ninth session of the Forum will focus on the theme "Forests for people, livelihoods and poverty eradication" through: (a) community-based forest management; (b) social development and other local and forest-dependent communities, including forest land tenure; and (c) social and cultural aspects.

3. As the work of major groups has significant impact on forest communities, they agreed to organize a multi-stakeholder workshop designed to support the Forum process and prepare concrete policy recommendations to be presented to the ninth session of the Forum.

4. The resulting workshop, which took place in Accra, Ghana, from 26 to 30 July 2010, brought together approximately 70 key representatives from 30 countries. The central goal of the event was to actively engage major groups and support the United Nations Forum on Forests process by developing input and policy recommendations for the ninth session of the Forum.

II. Opening ceremony

5. Speakers at the opening ceremony included Jan McAlpine, Director of the United Nations Forum on Forests secretariat, as the keynote speaker, Michael Gort, Charge d'affaires, Canadian High Commission and Henry Ford Kamel, Member of Parliament and Deputy Minister of Lands and Natural Resources, on behalf of Collins Dauda, Member of Parliament and Minister of Lands and Natural Resources for Ghana.

6. Speakers at the opening ceremony emphasized a number of key points:

(a) The workshop is a unique opportunity to bring together the major groups that are recognized under the United Nations Forum on Forests. A wide diversity of expertise and perspectives can contribute to a strong outcome in terms of recommendations to the ninth session of the Forum.

(b) On-the-ground experience is crucial in informing policy decisions. Workshop participants thus bring their knowledge of specific issues to the table in order to enrich the discussion and provide meaningful policy recommendations.

(c) Strong participatory models are necessary in order to produce strong policy outcomes. Therefore, major groups' participation in the workshop is a step towards strengthening major groups' participation in the Forum process.

7. Individual speakers highlighted a range of important issues. Lambert Okrah, as chair of the organizing committee and the international coordinator for the workshop, introduced and welcomed participants to the workshop. He highlighted

[1] See E/CN.18/2009/20-E/2009/42.

the difficult task ahead, but voiced his enthusiasm for the level of experience and knowledge coming from the diverse major groups attending the workshop. He emphasized that Governments can only boast of engaging in democratic governance when they create the opportunity for engagement with other stakeholders and take into account their contributions in arriving at policy decisions.

8. On behalf of Minister Collins Dauda, Henry Ford Kamel welcomed participants to Ghana, thanked the workshop sponsors and organizers, and performed the official opening. He affirmed Ghana's commitment to sustainable forest management, and to the success of the United Nations Forum on Forests process. He highlighted a number of recent initiatives that are under way in Ghana to prevent forest degradation, mainstream forest issues into national plans, and support local forest-dependent peoples. He noted the work that Ghana has done towards implementing the national forest programme and the important link with the Millennium Development Goals, particularly the goal of poverty eradication. He appealed to delegates to bring forward constructive suggestions that can make a difference in the livelihoods of local and indigenous peoples the world over.

9. Mr. Michael Gort, the Chargé d'affaires, Canadian High Commission and head of the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) in Ghana welcomed participants on behalf of the Government of Canada. He noted the commitment of the Government of Canada to good governance and sustainable forest management, and highlighted specific initiatives where Canada is supporting civil society. He noted that an important part of Canada's work in promoting sustainable forest management involves building institutional capacity and professional skills among local people.

10. Jan McAlpine, Director of the United Nations Forum on Forests secretariat, congratulated major groups and the Government of Ghana for holding the workshop. She expressed appreciation to the Governments and institutions that provided financial support for the event, and highlighted the commitment of the Forum secretariat to strengthening the involvement of major groups in the work of the Forum. Noting that Ghana is an example of a Member State that is engaged in reforming its forest policies and enhancing the livelihoods of forest-dependent communities, Ms. McAlpine stressed the need for major groups to utilize the opportunity provided by the broad membership of the Forum to strategically participate in the forest-policy deliberations. She encouraged major groups to put forth ideas for ensuring the success of the 2011 International Year of Forests, which will be officially launched in New York in February 2011 during the high-level segment of the ninth session of the Forum. She argued that there is a unique opportunity to achieve a high-profile focus on forests, and urged participants to utilize the holistic, or "360 degree", mandate of the Forum to make effective inputs into other forest-related deliberations. She suggested that the discussions being carried out under other forums, such as the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) should not be ignored, arguing rather that those concerned with the Forum should watch those processes closely.

III. Forests for people, livelihoods and poverty eradication: ninth session of the United Nations Forum on Forests

A. Presentation of case studies

11. A number of case studies were prepared and presented in order to inform and stimulate discussions. Full case study texts are available for download from the workshop website: www.mgi-forests.org.

1. Globally significant biodiversity areas and their impacts on livelihoods: a case study of the Tano Offin area in the Atwima Mponua and Ahafo Ano districts of the Ashanti region of Ghana, Matilda Akua Afriyie, Conservation and Development Foundation, Ghana

12. The case study highlighted the significance of globally significant biodiversity areas for forest-dependent communities in Ghana, but noted ongoing challenges. Ms. Afriyie emphasized the importance of promoting alternative livelihood schemes so that globally significant biodiversity areas do not negatively impact the ability for local communities to secure access to forest resources. According to Ms. Afriyie's study, many individuals in forest fringe communities experience livelihood difficulties as a result of their lack of access to forest resources. This is accentuated by the designation of globally significant biodiversity areas owing to the restrictive nature of the policy. The case study underscored the importance of preserving biodiversity, as well as providing alternative livelihood opportunities for individuals in forest fringe communities.

2. Harnessing indigenous and traditional forest-related knowledge: the case of North Eurasian countries, Andrey Laletin, Friends of the Siberian Forests, Russian Federation (primary author) and Vladimir Bocharnikov (co-author)

13. The paper provided an overview of how local and indigenous knowledge has contributed to traditional forest management in Eurasia, and examined traditional forest-related knowledge in Russia in more detail. Dr. Laletin stressed the importance of valuing traditional forest-related knowledge in promoting sustainable forest management. His case study supported the notion that current scientific practices designed for the management of forests may not be as sustainable as those traditionally practised by various local and indigenous peoples. Therefore, he concluded that it is important to study, understand and incorporate traditional forest-related knowledge and practices into sustainable forest management policies.

3. A new green deed: community action for forest regeneration and poverty reduction, Jyothi Krishnan, independent researcher, India (author) and Abey George, Government of Kerala, India (co-author)

14. The case study reviewed the implementation of the joint forest management programme in one of the forested districts of the state of Kerala, India. Dr. Krishnan argued that joint forest management has, over the past couple of decades, provided the structural policy framework to support important opportunities for community participation in forest management, but it has not yet reached its potential. The fact that joint forest management falls under the Forest Department in India creates particular bureaucratic impediments to the policy's potential. The study also

explored the possibilities opened up by the implementation of more recent legislation known as the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act. Highlighting both the opportunities and the constraints of these conservation-based livelihood assurance policies, the study argues that the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act can complement initiatives taken under the joint forest management programme in Kerala in significant and beneficial ways. The participatory elements of joint forest management should be enhanced by the employment legislation to create funding and employment opportunities that are both participatory and environmentally sustainable, but she notes the many challenges that surface in translating legislated forest-related provisions into practice.

4. Software and hardware: the search for self-sustaining adaptive collaborative management systems: the model forests response, Mariteuw Chimère Diaw, African Model Forests Network secretariat

15. Dr. Diaw presented the model forests programme as one response to the critical need for programmes to deliver both development and conservation objectives. He described the International Model Forests Network, which includes dozens of model forests in countries around the world, and noted that the Model Forest approach provides a framework through which meaningful and inclusive participation can occur in areas such as resource management, and community and economic development. He discussed each of the programme's key principles: voluntary partnerships; commitment to sustainability; landscapes; governance; a programme of work; and learning and networking. He stressed the importance of ensuring that local communities, including traditionally marginalized groups, are full and active contributors. Among the lessons learned from the programme, he noted that while a model forest's governance and activities are defined at the local level, the overall effort must fit within national objectives and must be country-driven.

B. Participant discussions and recommendations

16. Participants joined one of four discussion groups. Each group had a facilitator and guiding questions. The groups were tasked with developing concrete recommendations directed towards the work of the ninth session of the Forum. Recommendations were discussed and refined during plenary. The four discussion topics were: Tenure rights, access and benefit sharing; Traditional forest-related knowledge; Community-based forest enterprises; and Women, indigenous peoples and other marginalized groups: leadership for sustainable forest management.

1. Tenure rights, access and benefit sharing (Facilitator: Ghan Shyam Pandey)

Discussion/questions

17. What type of system of tenure rights, access and benefit sharing will best ensure livelihood benefits and sustainable forest management? How can the situation on tenure rights, access and benefit sharing be improved? What can be done to close gaps and identify best practice?

Narrative summary and highlights

18. Participants recognized the significant existing variability in tenure systems, under which tenure over forests is influenced by both statutory and customary laws that differ from country to country. Participants also recognized the complexity of issues associated with tenure rights, access to resources, and the sharing of benefits derived from resources, but emphasized the fact that the goal of improving the livelihoods of forest-dependent peoples and of eradicating poverty is strongly dependent upon secure, sustainable, equitable and transparent land tenure rights.

19. It was noted that, in both practice and in policy, there are important distinctions between tenure rights, ownership rights and access rights. Policy discussions regarding both national and international legal frameworks must clarify these concepts. Participants also stressed that all rights (access, tenure and ownership) need to be accompanied by responsibilities. The tenure rights and responsibility system must be interlinked with the benefit sharing system.

20. Discussants agreed that any system of tenure rights and access to forest resources must: (a) recognize the importance of multiple uses of forest resources by local people; (b) have as a central focus the livelihood requirements of poor and marginalized forest-dependent communities (including women and indigenous peoples); and (c) allow for significant and meaningful levels of access and local control over forest lands and forest resources, including a role in the decision-making structures that determine how the resources are to be used, and to whom the benefits from those resources will accrue. Importantly, tangible and intangible forest benefits must be incorporated into the system such that strategic watersheds, ecologically sensitive corridors, and biodiversity are protected. In addition to access and tenure rights, the system must ensure market access, sufficient support systems and other rights such as freedom of association. It was felt that there is a great need for capacity-building programmes at all levels that address educational, institutional, infrastructural, and other tenure-related issues.

21. Rights and responsibilities must be governed by a regulatory framework (either a national or international policy framework, or one that is based on customary law) that is developed with the active and meaningful involvement of all stakeholders, including especially women and indigenous peoples, that recognizes livelihood security, and that has adequate institutional support.

22. It was noted that there are particular contexts in which private ownership can enhance incentives for forest sustainability, whereas in other contexts private ownership of forest resources can serve to marginalize underrepresented groups. Thus any forest-related policy that designates tenure rights and access to forest resources must take into account the systemic incentives to either conserve or degrade forest resources, as well as the larger institutions that organize benefit sharing within the particular local context. In assessing the tenure rights and the sharing of benefits of forest resources, a range of values must be incorporated into the definition of what it means for something to be "sustainable". Sustainability must include ecological, cultural, economic and social elements. Both tangible and intangible benefits from forests must be accounted for.

Specific recommendations

23. The following recommendations emerged:

- Encourage Governments to undertake both land and forest tenure reforms
- Ensure discussions and processes related to benefit sharing include meaningful participation of local and indigenous communities
- Encourage Governments to establish a stable legal framework with the active involvement of all stakeholders, including women and indigenous peoples
- Facilitate the creation of effective institutions to implement the legal framework
- Promote capacity-building programmes at all levels that addresses educational, institutional, infrastructural, and other tenure-related issues
- Support pilot projects, case studies, and research endeavours that identify the gaps and possible solutions

2. Traditional forest-related knowledge (Facilitator: Joseph Cobbinah)

Guiding question

24. How can indigenous/traditional forest-related knowledge be applied to support improved livelihoods and sustainable forest management?

Key points of discussion

25. The group accepted a simple working understanding of traditional forest-related knowledge: Traditional forest-related knowledge, practices and techniques are distinctive to particular tribes, gender, communities and culture and are generally passed from generation to generation. They are not static, but constantly evolving and can relate to diverse scales (global, regional, national, local). The points of discussion included the following:

- Traditional forest-related knowledge is applied in myriad ways, including forecasting seasonal events and weather; timing agricultural activities; effectively using plants and animals for a variety of purposes; protecting watersheds, soil and forest resources, inter alia
- Traditional knowledge systems and modern scientific knowledge systems are not exclusive or incompatible. Traditional forest-related knowledge is a complementary and essential part of scientific knowledge systems
- Many taboos and beliefs favour sustainable forest management; for example, locally designated and protected sacred sites have been shown to be effective mechanisms for protection of forests
- Traditional forest-related knowledge education is lacking, and formal education in disciplines related to forestry or natural resource management or policy rarely includes traditional forest-related knowledge education
- Traditional forest-related knowledge has long been known to have important implications for forest management, conservation of forest biodiversity and identification of forest genetic resources

- Traditional forest-related knowledge often underpins sustainable forest management and sustainable livelihoods
- Commercialization and global markets are negatively impacting on sustainable forest management
- Biopiracy of traditional forest-related knowledge is an ongoing concern
- Traditional forest-related knowledge can play a role in healthy forests, which can serve to mitigate impacts of climate change (not only carbon, but water, O_2, soil protection, non-timber forest products, etc.)
- Traditional forest-related knowledge can support adaptation of indigenous peoples and local communities to climate change
- There is a serious gap in implementation of global conventions that recognize traditional forest-related knowledge at national and local levels
- Participants recognized a difficulty in obtaining information from users of traditional forest-related knowledge; many practices are shrouded in secrecy, and there is a lack of trust of scientists, which can make the goals of protecting and promoting traditional forest-related knowledge difficult

Narrative summary and highlights

26. Participants felt that work being done to further the understanding and recognition of traditional forest-related knowledge in other United Nations-related bodies must be recognized. This includes the very helpful deliberations that have been taking place under the Convention on Biological Diversity, particularly in relation to article 8 (j). In addition, past recommendations, such as those from the international expert meeting on the implementation of traditional forest-related knowledge and related international commitments (San Jose, 6-12 December 2004) should be taken into account.

27. Participants agreed that national and international forest-related policies, laws and institutions must recognize the importance and legitimacy of traditional forest-related knowledge in maintaining forests and livelihood security for forest-dependent peoples. It was noted that, among other things, the best current understanding of traditional forest-related knowledge includes the understanding that its protection and promotion is linked inextricably with forest-dependent peoples' cultural and intellectual heritage, and to their secure rights to lands. Discussants believed that educational institutions must be leveraged to play a strong role in enhancing understanding of the importance of traditional forest-related knowledge. Governments and the United Nations Forum on Forests should work to ensure that current curriculums related to forest management and conservation include content and inputs related to traditional forest-related knowledge. Governments should also emphasize the importance of support for further research into traditional forest-related knowledge and the positive impact traditional practices can have on sustaining forests. Traditional forest-related knowledge must be recognized as a valuable complement to both past and contemporary scientific practices related to forest management and conservation, and practices utilized in forest management should incorporate relevant aspects of traditional forest-related knowledge. Participants agreed that forest-related policies must recognize it as a vital means of protecting forests and enhancing livelihoods of forest-dependent

peoples and that concrete measures must be taken to prevent the expropriation of forest-dependent communities' knowledge and resources. The collective, holistic and intergenerational nature of traditional forest-related knowledge must be recognized and supported within forest policy processes.

Specific recommendations

28. The following recommendations emerged:

- Traditional forest-related knowledge should be mainstreamed into national forest plans and programmes with the involvement of all relevant stakeholders, including local and indigenous communities
- Planning for sustainable forest management should be a participatory activity involving both traditional forest-related knowledge and modern scientific knowledge systems
- Countries should support further research on traditional forest-related knowledge and work with knowledge holders and users to create archives and novel ways to conserve and promote it
- An equitable benefit sharing regime should be developed
- Best practices to secure intellectual property rights in different countries should be recognized and a legal system of traditional forest-related knowledge protection should be established before creation of traditional forest-related knowledge archives and registries
- Indicators for monitoring of the role of traditional forest-related knowledge in sustainable forest management should be developed
- All Governments should ratify international conventions relevant to traditional forest-related knowledge and forests, and mechanisms for monitoring, assessment and reporting of implementation of global conventions should be established at country level involving major groups
- Traditional rights, social, cultural, spiritual and economic values of indigenous peoples should be recognized and respected
- Sacred sites should be conserved
- Traditional knowledge systems should be mainstreamed into formal education systems
- The general public should be educated about traditional forest-related knowledge and its importance in sustainable forest management

3. Community-based forest enterprises (Facilitator: Sim Heok-Choh)

Guiding questions

29. How can communities improve livelihoods from community-based forest enterprises through: (a) timber products; (b) non-timber products; and (c) ecosystem services?

Narrative summary and highlights

30. Participants accepted a working definition of community-based forest enterprises as enterprises with very strong inputs from communities in managing, exploring and giving values to forest resources, where benefits are shared equitably and accrue largely or wholly to the community.

31. Participants highlighted a number of common issues important to community-based enterprises, including: ownership; empowerment of communities for decision-making; consultation at decision-making processes; access to markets and market intelligence; establishment of a mechanism on benefit sharing; value addition; financing for local initiatives; recognizing payment for ecosystem services as an enterprise option; involvement of non-governmental organizations.

32. Participants noted that, in order to improve the livelihoods of forest-dependent peoples through community-based forest enterprises, local communities must have access and ownership rights to timber products, non-timber forest products and ecosystem services.

33. They suggested that community-based forest enterprises should be based on adding value to raw forest resources so that greater benefits can accrue to the local communities rather than to non-local entities. They agreed that local communities must have access to markets and to market intelligence in order to effectively participate in community-based forest enterprises that increase the livelihoods of forest-dependent peoples. Local communities must be consulted at all levels of decision-making regarding community-based forest enterprises. Moreover, discussants agreed that non-governmental organizations, Governments and forest-dependent communities should be effectively linked in order to promote community-based forest enterprises that enhance the livelihoods of forest-dependent peoples.

34. Participants noted that measures to safeguard workers' safety and welfare must be developed and maintained. In order to enhance and maintain effective community-based forest enterprises, capacity-building must be geared towards developing local forest-dependent peoples' skills and technical capabilities. Payment for non-timber ecosystem services must be a viable option for community-based forest enterprises, as forest-dependent communities rely on a range of forest-related resources.

Specific recommendations

35. The following recommendations emerged:

Developing local businesses

- Encourage communities to move up the value chain (i.e., not concentrating only on primary production) and develop strategy to position small local businesses in higher-value activities
- Vigorously support the establishment of community-based forest enterprises based on advanced processing and marketing of timber and non-timber products
- Support the development of small forest enterprises focused on packaging and delivering high quality environmental services and opportunities for capturing land rents, etc.

- Support and regulate second tier intermediary organizations linking the community-based forest enterprise to next users along the value chain

Creating enabling conditions

- Promote research, development and training programmes and academic curricula focused on supporting community-based forest enterprises and small/medium forestry enterprise
- Develop mechanisms to improve local understanding and positioning in the value chain for optimal benefits
- Develop programmes and guidelines to enhance entrepreneurial options, skills, know-how and practices for local businesses
- Institute financing mechanisms with a clear focus on developing local businesses and value addition
- Facilitate financing and technical support to community-based forest enterprises by national and local governments
- Develop institutional arrangements for standardization and certification of community-based forest enterprises products
- Facilitate stakeholder agreements and legal arrangements that recognize and protect community rights (e.g., intellectual property rights, land trees rights, carbon rights, market and export rights)
- Develop mechanisms to enhance communities' access to markets, market intelligence and communication

Ensuring environmental and social safeguards

- Support multi-stakeholder platforms to facilitate good environmental governance and sustainable management of local natural resources
- Match the development of community-based value chain with efforts to analyse, anticipate, monitor and correct negative environmental and social impacts
- Support and enforce measures to safeguard workers' safety, welfare and skill training
- Address inclusive benefit sharing
- Strengthen fair private-community partnerships

4. Women, indigenous peoples and other marginalized groups: leadership for sustainable forest management (Facilitator: Wangu Mutua)

Guiding questions

36. How can women, indigenous peoples and other underprivileged forest-dependent peoples be recognized as leaders and partners in forest management? Why are the groups often not recognized? Where are they currently recognized: are there successes? How do we assure their recognition at all levels?

Key points of discussion

37. Participants noted ways in which these groups are currently recognized:

- Within some community forest associations, although forest access is often limited
- Community forest guidelines on participation of women and decision-making and management (e.g., case of Nepal)
- As major groups of the United Nations Forum on Forests
- As providers of labour
- Rights in employment/labour matters but not in reality (International Labour Organization Convention 169, Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women)
- Recognition by some United Nations agencies
- No recognition in some United Nations bodies and specialized agencies
- No safeguard policy in World Bank; e.g., for forest workers and their unions, which results in laws not being obeyed

38. Participants noted reasons why these groups are not recognized:

- Urban populations are not aware/not concerned with rural issues; need to convey importance of forests management
- Lack of effective, strong associations; need to highlight good examples
- Law status and stereotyping of indigenous peoples and women; often they are not seen as capable
- Lack of interest to see women as having special needs that differ from "communities"
- Kind of forestry that women do; subsistence farmers, challenge of big companies
- Lack of legal recognitions; limited/no title to land ownership
- Many grass-roots women are not educated or informed about key issues
- Gender bias in forestry profession
- Many gender advocates not interested in following developments regarding forests

39. Participants suggested ways to ensure recognition at all levels:

- Get them into processes: work at national level with governments and highlight the contribution of each group to forest; e.g., link to key issues: food security, energy, livelihoods
- Use the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women: influence the Committee, the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), the high-level segment of the Economic and Social Council, Commission on the Status of Women, etc.
- Disseminate case studies on the groups' role in forests

- Form strategic alliances of major groups, to work collaboratively
- Get secure tenure/rights to forest and carbon, recognition of communal-traditional rights; use this to build solidarity

40. Participants cited four necessary elements: tenure, individual or collective; fair market access; good quality support services (credit, technical assistance); and strong associations (at all levels, linked from community to global level), recognized by Governments, that know issues and rights.

Narrative summary and highlights

41. Participants agreed that equitable and sustainable forest management institutions must ensure that women, indigenous peoples and other marginalized forest-dependent people have secure access to forest resources. Noting that women often have different needs and responsibilities with regard to forest resources than men, women must be engaged at all levels of forest policy decision-making. While women, indigenous peoples and other marginalized peoples have crucial knowledge regarding resource management, and should be encouraged to participate at all levels of forest-related policymaking, their marginalization may also prevent them from accessing education and technical knowledge regarding sustainable forest management. Practical support for their participation must be available in order to ensure that their voices can be integrated into forest policy-related processes. This should include capacity-building among marginalized groups (including negotiation skills and knowledge of rights, inter alia).

42. Discussants noted that as conclusions drawn in forest policy-related arenas outside of the United Nations Forum on Forests (such as those related to REDD and REDD-plus) will impact women, indigenous peoples and other marginalized groups, linkages must be made between the work of the Forum and other forest-related policy deliberations. Linkages between women's, indigenous peoples' and other marginalized groups' development organizations (such as UNIFEM) and agreements (such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women) need to be linked with organizations related to the promotion of sustainable forest management.

Specific recommendations

43. The following recommendations emerged:

- Develop case studies highlighting situations where communities/individuals have clear rights, where those rights have shown to contribute to results for environment and equity, in order to show how secure tenure is critical and how to achieve this
- Link to land rights advocates under the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, UNIFEM, social movements, strategies for political empowerment
- Deliver gender awareness and sensitivity training for diverse stakeholders, including international agencies; government policymakers; forestry institutions (including forestry schools, departments); extension service providers; non-governmental organizations; community members

- Provide training in practical leadership skills, negotiation, etc. for women, indigenous peoples and other marginalized groups, to help them know and articulate their rights and provide strong leadership for sustainable forest management
- Advocate for marginalized groups to participate fully in consultations at all levels; major groups could monitor participation to ensure diversity and effectiveness
- Share information and examples of interlinkages (e.g., between tenure and poverty)
- Focus on tenure and political/economic empowerment to address larger social obstacles to the participation of marginalized groups
- Support processes of organizational change within forestry institutions

C. Key cross-cutting issues that emerged across all four working groups

44. Following are key cross-cutting issues that emerged across all four working groups:

(a) Meaningful participation is needed in order to strengthen policy frameworks;

(b) Individual contexts need to be taken into account in order to ensure that policies are equitable and promote the livelihoods of forest-dependent peoples;

(c) A strong forest policy needs to address issues associated with equity in terms of access, rights, land and resources tenure, and benefits generated from forests;

(d) Capacity-building is needed in order to effectively implement policies related to sustainable forest management (livelihoods, poverty reduction, etc.) and ensure active inclusion of marginalized groups;

(e) More work should be done to integrate the achievements made in other United Nations forums on issues that are vital to forest-dependent communities. Connections between the work of the Forum and other related United Nations bodies must be strengthened and enhanced;

(f) Research and knowledge generation that emphasizes the needs of forest-dependent communities must be encouraged, supported and enhanced.

D. Key policy recommendations (communiqué)

45. The participants in the workshop issued a communique in which they underscored the importance of forests in providing diverse livelihood benefits, ecosystem services and biodiversity stores, and stressed the fact that livelihoods of forest-dependent people are integrally linked to the sustainability of forests.

46. The participants recognized the many attempts to date of member Governments and other stakeholders to advance sustainable forest management

through the Forum, and developed key recommendations linked to the themes of tenure rights, access and benefit sharing, traditional forest-related knowledge, community-based forest enterprises, and leadership for sustainable forest management among women, indigenous peoples and other marginalized groups.

47. To build on gains so far made, the meeting produced a number of key recommendations:

(a) Further concrete steps should be taken to ensure meaningful participation of all stakeholders, including in particular women, youth and indigenous peoples, in order to strengthen policy frameworks;

(b) Forest policy must address issues associated with equity in terms of access, rights, land and resources tenure, and benefits generated from forests. Reforms should be undertaken where necessary to ensure that rights and responsibilities are upheld;

(c) Case studies that demonstrate innovative practice (such as participatory mapping) and successful implementation, should be highlighted, shared and used to inform policy decisions;

(d) Forest-dependent peoples must have reliable access to forest resources, and must have a role in the decision-making structures that decide how the resources are to be used, and to whom the benefits from those resources will accrue;

(e) Policies must take into account local contexts in order to ensure that they are equitable and promote the livelihoods of forest-dependent peoples;

(f) Capacity-building efforts must be strengthened at all levels and among all groups (including indigenous peoples, women, youth and other marginalized groups) in order to effectively implement policies related to sustainable forest management (e.g., livelihoods, poverty reduction);

(g) Community-based forest enterprises that focus on sustainable, value added goods and services should be promoted and supported, and payment for ecosystem services must be a viable option;

(h) National and international forest-related policies, laws and institutions should recognize the importance and legitimacy of traditional forest-related knowledge and local knowledge in maintaining forests and livelihood security for forest-dependent peoples, and take steps to incorporate it into planning and implementation;

(i) Research and knowledge generation that emphasizes the needs of forest-dependent communities must be encouraged, supported and enhanced. Traditional forest-related knowledge must be documented in close collaboration with knowledge holders, and individuals and communities must receive fair compensation for use of their knowledge;

(j) More work should be done to integrate the achievements of other United Nations forums on issues that are vital to forest-dependent communities. Connections between the work of the United Nations Forum on Forests and other related United Nations bodies must be strengthened and enhanced.

IV. Enhancing major group participation in the United Nations Forum on Forests

48. Tim Cadman, from the University of Southern Queensland, set the context for the discussion by sharing the results of his research on major group involvement in the United Nations Forum on Forests. Participants then addressed the question of how best to enhance major groups participation in the Forum process around three themes. The first theme addressed the effective representation of major groups at the forum. The second theme addressed the strengths and weaknesses of the multi-stakeholder dialogue process within the Forum. The third theme explored the question of how to enhance activities and engagement of major groups in the Forum during the intersessional periods between Forum meetings.

A. Major group participation in the Forum: framing the discussion

49. Dr. Cadman's talk served to frame the discussion on the effectiveness of major group involvement in the Forum process. His results, which also included findings from a survey of Forum participants, shed light on the current and future participation of major groups.

(a) Major group participation in Forum deliberations has been inconsistent over time. After an initial period of significant involvement at the inception of the Forum, major groups' involvement has declined in recent forums, to the extent that some groups no longer participate. This relative lack of major group participation threatens to undermine the credibility of the Forum in the eyes of both State and non-State interests.

(b) Future success of the Forum and re-engagement of major groups will depend significantly on governance arrangements that are broadly representative of diverse interest types and groups, accountable and transparent, effective in terms of decision-making processes, and able to change behaviour on the ground and create lasting problem-solving mechanisms.

B. Effective representation of major groups in the United Nations Forum on Forests

50. Participants proposed the following recommendations in order to enhance effective representation of major groups in the United Nations Forum on Forests:

- Strengthen consultations at country/regional level between Governments and major groups.
- Secure funds to ensure representation of focal points for major groups.
- Secure funds to facilitate country/regional consultations.
- Include one or two major groups representatives within country delegations, chosen on the advice of major groups, who would act as expert advisers to the delegation.
- Map existing experts and processes at the country and regional levels.

- Capture and produce combined messages and best practices in a video
- Build on global and regional networks

C. Multi-stakeholder dialogue

51. Participants discussed the multi-stakeholder dialogue process, highlighting weakness in the current process, and proposing recommendations to strengthen the multi-stakeholder dialogue.

Weaknesses of the multi-stakeholder dialogue

- Major groups are mostly seated at the back and generally only read statements, with little additional interaction or activity
- Major group statements rarely elicit reaction, comments or questions from government delegates
- At times governments misunderstand or downplay issues important to major groups (e.g., tenure issues)
- There is a gap in the use of terminology and definitions
- Major groups can become discouraged by the perceived lack of interest of some Governments, which can discourage participation of major groups in subsequent sessions
- Presentation of statements has often involved the rushed reading of long documents, which does not allow the effective communication of ideas and concerns of major groups

Recommendations

- The multi-stakeholder dialogue should begin early in home countries, not just in New York. For example, major groups should have a draft position that can be discussed at the national and regional levels for feedback far in advance of sessions held in New York
- Major groups should network, lobby and dialogue at country and regional level, e.g., the Economic Community of West African States, the Southern African Development Community, the East African Community
- There must be serious efforts to identify and explore ways of involving Governments
- Members of major groups should be included in government delegations
- Major groups must work to improve delivery of statements (for example, by using creative and/or multimedia approaches, such as video)
- Major groups should explore the possibility of preparing joint statements
- Good examples from countries should be documented and shared as case studies

- Specific efforts should be made to ensure that major group recommendations are taken seriously and incorporated (major groups should politely insist on reactions from Governments on major group statements)
- Space in the official programme should be created for major group communication with delegates, beyond the mere reading of statements
- Greater efforts should be made to include groups left out in the delegations
- Major groups should be engaged more actively between sessions

D. Engagement of major groups between sessions of the United Nations Forum on Forests

52. Participants identified specific intersessional activities and plans for the period between the ninth and tenth sessions of the Forum, while answering the question, "How can major groups participate and play a key role at national and regional levels?".

Key recommendations for enhancing intersessional activities

- Major groups should make efforts to participate in existing events related to sustainable forest management at the national and regional level, including engaging in forest-related events linked to different United Nations processes and institutions
- The concept and roles of major groups must be promoted at the country level as a way to generate greater involvement of all stakeholders
- Major groups could provide information and raise awareness on the Forum through seminars, workshops and other activities
- Major group representatives working on forests should engage other major group members at the national level
- Governments should involve major groups in national activities related to sustainable forest management
- Major groups should submit their recommendations at the national level before every Forum meeting
- Major groups of the Forum should prepare for forest discussions at the session of the Commission on Sustainable Development in 2012-2013 and cooperate with Commission on Sustainable Development groups at the national and regional level
- Intersessional meetings of major groups should be organized by region or by major group, and major groups should organize a workshop on economic aspects of sustainable forest management in preparation for the tenth session of the Forum
- Major groups could be active in monitoring non-forest products and the forest instrument implementation in pilot countries
- There should be capacity-building activities for major groups through workshops, seminars, etc.

- Major groups should be involved as experts in the preparation of country presentations to the Forum as well as in reporting back for monitoring
- The issue of regular and ongoing funding for intersessional major group initiatives should be addressed as part of forest financing discussions

V. The International Year of Forests 2011

53. Participants discussed the upcoming International Year of Forests (2011), and began planning for activities related to the celebration. Goals of the sessions were to identify specific activities for major groups contribution to the International Year of Forests and to foster alliances, partnerships and networking within major groups and between major groups and other key players in the Forum process.

A. United Nations Forum on Forests and the International Year of Forests: plans and opportunities for engagement

54. The United Nations Forum on Forests secretariat gave a presentation on the International Year of Forests and indicated that the launch of the Year would take place in New York in early February 2011, during the high-level segment of the ninth session of the Forum. The presentation emphasized that the goals of the International Year of Forests are to amplify the issues related to forests in order to increase visibility of forests and raise the profile of forest-related dynamics. The primary theme of the International Year of Forests is "Forests for people", which is intended to emphasize not only the importance of forests for individuals' livelihoods, but also the collaborative work that is required in order to make progress towards achieving such goals as the Millennium Development Goals and other United Nations-related agreements. The secretariat noted that throughout the International Year of Forests in 2011 a variety of activities and campaigns will be taking place that are designed to raise awareness of the importance of forests. "Forest Ambassadors" will also be selected to promote the International Year of Forests and champion the cause of sustainable forest management. Ultimately, the Forum secretariat emphasized the importance of engaging major groups in developing their own celebrations and activities surrounding the International Year of Forests in order to ensure its broad success.

B. Major activities identified by major groups for the International Year of Forests

55. Following the United Nations Forum on Forests secretariat's presentation on the International Year of Forests, major groups identified activities for the Year:

- Prepare policy briefs, fact sheet, flyers, posters, technical documents
- Prepare information packages and educational materials (for schools, the public and distribution within existing networks)
- Organize national launches for the International Year of Forests
- Host regional seminars/workshops on topical issues

- Find "Ambassadors" from all regions to promote the International Year of Forests and sustainable forest management
- Organize a traditional ceremony by elders during the launch of the International Year of Forests 2011
- Provide microgrants for non-governmental organizations and local communities to work on forest issues
- Prepare and disseminate information on what the International Year of Forests means to indigenous peoples and translate it into local languages
- Organize mass-media and public relations campaigns about the International Year of Forests (through television, radio, newspapers)
- Link with education systems and community groups to get the message out
- Use creative approaches and emphasize a hopeful message
    - Set up awards for videos made by students — for use on web pages and at events
    - Music concerts, community events, parades
    - Contests — songs, poetry, art
    - Tree planting — in schools, companies, communities
- Partner with and gain support from the United Nations Forum on Forests for outreach, sponsor identification and approach, etc.
- Prepare newsletters and position papers (web-based)
- Encourage national television programmes on forest issues (possible link to United Nations Forum on Forests initiative with National Geographic)

VI. Closing ceremony

56. The official closing ceremony was held on the afternoon of Friday, 30 July 2010. The chair of the organizing committee, Lambert Okrah, officially commenced the ceremony by reading the workshop communiqué (see paras. 45-47 above) for the assembled delegates and journalists. Following the presentation of the communiqué he encouraged major groups to continue in earnest their work in contributing to the United Nations Forum on Forests, and asked participants to consider how they could further enhance this process.

57. Representing participants, Wangu Mutua formally thanked the Steering Committee, the supporting Governments, and the host Government of Ghana. She expressed appreciation for the opportunity to engage in a workshop in order to contribute directly and meaningfully to the United Nations Forum on Forests.

58. Henry Ford Kamel, Member of Parliament and Deputy Minister of Lands and Natural Resources of Ghana, delivered the closing address on behalf of Collins Dauda, Minister of Lands and Natural Resources for Ghana. The Deputy Minister thanked the sponsors, organizers, and participants for contributing to the success of the event. He stressed the importance of events such as the workshop that help to build necessary momentum for advancing the work of the United Nations Forum on

Forests towards sustainable forest management and poverty eradication. He said that the Government of Ghana was looking forward to submitting the report of the initiative to the United Nations Forum on Forests, to become part of the official documentation of the ninth session of the Forum.

Annex

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